

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) An isolated, recombinant or purified peptide comprising at least one string of 12 consecutive amino acids from (SEQ ID NO: 11), wherein said isolated, recombinant or purified peptide has IL-6 antagonistic activity as determined by a bioassay for determining IL-6 antagonistic activity, and said bioassay comprising contacting IL-6-dependent cells with said isolated, recombinant or purified peptide and determining an effect of said isolated, recombinant or purified peptide on IL-6 stimulation of said IL-6-dependent cells.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously presented) The isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1 of 12-20 amino acids.

5. (Previously presented) The isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1 of 12 amino acids.

6 and 7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously presented) A peptide composition, wherein at least two isolated, recombinant or purified peptides of claim 1 are chemically linked directly or via spacer molecules.

9. (Previously presented) The peptide composition of claim 8, wherein the at least two chemically linked peptides are linked with lysine.

10. (Withdrawn) A peptide composition wherein at least two peptides according to

claim 1 having at least one string of 5 consecutive amino acids long in common with the amino acid sequence RYILDGISALRK (SEQ. ID. NO.: 1) are linked with lysine.

11. (Previously presented) The peptide composition of claim 8, wherein at least four isolated, recombinant or purified peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

12. (Previously presented) A mixture comprising the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1.

13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously presented) A preparation comprising:  
the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1, together with an inert carrier.

16-18. (Canceled)

19. (Withdrawn) A method for exerting agonistic IL-6 activity at concentrations that are relatively equivalent to 7.5 to 120  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  using a peptide according to claim 7.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously presented) A method for culturing cells comprising:  
incubating or culturing said cells in a medium; and  
contacting said cells, or the medium wherein said cells are incubated or cultured, with the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1.

22-46. (Canceled)

47. (Withdrawn) A method for manufacturing a pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 7 for topical or intra-mammary application.

48-71. (Canceled)

72. (Previously presented) The peptide composition of claim 9, wherein the at least two linked peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

73. (Withdrawn) The peptide composition of claim 10 wherein at least four peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

74. (Currently amended) A method for exerting agonistic IL-6 activity at concentrations of 7.5 to 120 µg/ml comprising:

contacting an IL-6 dependent cell with the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1;

wherein the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide is provided at a concentration of about 7.5 to 120 µg/ml; and

wherein contacting the cell is performed in the presence of IL-6 thus exerting agonistic IL-6 activity.

75. (Currently amended) A mixture comprising the peptide composition of claim 8, together with an inert carrier.

76. (Withdrawn) An antibody specifically directed against the isolated, recombinant peptide of claim 1.

77. (Withdrawn) An antibody specifically directed against the peptide composition of claim 8.

78. (Previously presented) A composition comprising:  
the peptide composition of claim 8; and an inert carrier.

79. (Withdrawn) A pharmaceutical preparation comprising the antibody of claim 76,  
together with at least one suitable excipient for administration.

80. (Withdrawn) A pharmaceutical preparation comprising the antibody of claim 77,  
together with at least one suitable excipient for administration.

81. (Canceled)

82. (Withdrawn) A method for clearing extra-corporeal blood or blood products from  
IL-6 or IL-6 receptor molecules comprising contacting said blood or blood product with the  
antibody of claim 76.

83. (Withdrawn) A method for clearing extra-corporeal blood or blood products from  
IL-6 or IL-6 receptor molecules comprising contacting said blood or blood product with the  
antibody of claim 77.

84. (Withdrawn) A method for treating or preventing an IL-6 related disease in a subject  
comprising administering to the subject the pharmaceutical preparation of claim 79.

85. (Withdrawn) A method for treating or preventing an IL-6 related disease in a subject  
comprising administering to the subject the pharmaceutical preparation of claim 80.

86. (Canceled)